UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1999/NGO/2
15 July 1999

Original: ENGLISH

Substantive session of 1999
Geneva, 5-30 July 1999
Agenda items 3 (a) and (b), 6 and 12

Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: poverty eradication and capacity-building: follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits

Non-governmental organizations

Statement submitted by the International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

GE.99-64230 (E)

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to address the Economic and Social Council during its current session. I am speaking on behalf of the International Federation of Settlements and Neighbourhood Centres (IFS), which is an international association accredited to the Council in the general category. IFS is an international social service organization which provides services to people in need in 61 countries. The following statement also reflects the views of the Non-Governmental Organization Committee on Social Development.

We are particularly concerned with items 3 (a) and (b) dealing with "poverty eradication and capacity-building" and "follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly" in the field of social development, in particular we are concerned with item 6 which relates to the follow-up of major United Nations conferences and summits. Finally, we also wish to express our views concerning item 12, dealing with non-governmental organizations.

With respect to poverty eradication, the primary role of settlement houses and many other non-governmental organizations is to alleviate the social precarity for those living in poverty. From a practical point of view services rendered at the local level are an essential tool to achieve social protection. For this purpose we urge the United Nations system to broaden its definition of social services so as to incorporate other vital services in addition to basic health and education. Comprehensive basic services should include strengthening of community organizations, provision of services specially designed for vulnerable populations, such as battered women's shelters, treatment for substance abuse, programmes for people living with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS), day care for single-parent families, mental health treatment, services for the elderly, provision of activities for all age groups, and specialized services for immigrants and refugees. Not all of these are adequately covered under the definitions for health and education. Moreover, when the United Nations discusses education it tends to marginalize vocational education, which is an essential factor in increasing productive employment. Appropriate training is needed to meet the employment needs of vulnerable people, as well as associated welfare programmes and related social work services. IFS and many non-governmental organizations are prepared to contribute their own experience in devising and operating such programmes, usually on a voluntary basis, both to international agencies and interested Governments.

Another area of concern is the availability of funds for grants and low-interest loans to assist people to fight poverty. Credit unions and other forms of micro-credit frequently can assist people to create micro-enterprises. Such activities have been carried out by settlement houses in their neighbourhoods for many years. They frequently have the mechanisms required by banks to make funds available and to ensure accountability and repayment. IFS is therefore urging that serious consideration be given by the various banks and funding agencies, especially those working in the developing countries, to using appropriate non-governmental organizations in the dispensing of funds for the development of small enterprises in local

communities. This aspect of community financing seems to have been largely ignored in the programmes currently being developed by banks and related financial agencies.

In the follow-up of the major conferences and, in particular, of the World Summit for Social Development, non-governmental organizations can also play a more positive role than has been attributed to them in the past. Non-governmental organizations have long experience in evaluating and reporting their own programmes. Sophisticated tools have been developed primarily to satisfy the requirements of donors. Such tools enable many non-governmental organizations to analyse their own projects, frequently making use of outside experts. For example, many settlement houses have cooperated in establishing teams which go into local communities and assess the success or failure of specific projects and programmes. IFS, based on its own experience, therefore urges that this form of follow-up and evaluation be included in the current agenda being worked out for the five-year review of the achievement of the goals of the Summit and the other follow-up conferences. IFS would like to be included in the planning process and long-term follow-up. Local branches of IFS and probably other non-governmental organizations would be available to work with their Governments (including local authorities) in developing such evaluation programmes.

IFS urges the Economic and Social Council to make more extensive use of non-governmental organizations in obtaining reports on conditions in areas where programmes are being undertaken to alleviate poverty. We believe that non-governmental organization reports should be included in all national reports that are requested for the follow-up mechanisms.

One of the mechanisms for monitoring and follow-up to the United Nations conferences is the use of social indicators. Non-governmental organizations have watched with great interest the preparations for the Technical Conference on Indicators and have participated in providing their own experience in this field. They have stressed that there should be more recognition of qualitative indicators based on sampling and interviewing local communities rather than the current dependence on quantitative indicators. We hope the Economic and Social Council will adopt this approach in the planning for the five-year review of the achievement of the goals of the Summit and the other world conferences.

In another field, the work of the United Nations as well as the International Labour Organization and the International Organization of Migration has developed a constructive approach to the migration issue as a whole. IFS participated in the Technical Symposium held in the Netherlands and found itself somewhat isolated as a non-governmental organization providing absorption services and dealing with the special social problems of migrants and their families. The only other non-governmental organizations represented, including the World Council of Churches, deal primarily with bringing the problems of migration to the attention of Governments. We hope that the somewhat tentative plans for a full migration conference will materialize and that IFS can be a partner in the process.

In a somewhat unrelated area, IFS urges that more attention be given to the role of young people not only in the area of poverty alleviation, but also in the major follow-up activities of the conferences. At the present time, it appears to us that the youth programmes of the United Nations and in particular, the Braga Youth Forum and the Lisbon Conference of Ministers, have been sidelined and we hope there will be closer liaison established between the machinery for follow-up of the Lisbon and other United Nations conferences. It is after all the future generation which is going to have to take over.

With respect to the item on non-governmental organizations, IFS wishes to put on record its appreciation of the work done by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations during the current year and its more open approach to non-governmental organization participation. We appreciate the volume of work required under the accreditation system and strongly support the efforts being made by the Committee to expedite the process and to assure itself of the validity of non-governmental organizations' requests. We understand fully the need for the establishment and enforcement of rules to guide both the accreditation and the activities of the non-governmental organizations. We are happy to work with the Committee in exploring how far the guidelines for accreditation of Council non-governmental organizations can be applied in obtaining access to the United Nations and other areas. We hope that the Committee will assist us in our dealings with other areas of the United Nations.

We also hope that the Committee will give more serious attention to the content of the quadrennial reports. They should be a challenge, both to the non-governmental organizations concerned and to the Committee as a tool for serious evaluation of each non-governmental organization.

UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1999/NGO/3
16 July 1999

Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH/
SPANISH

Substantive session of 1999
Geneva, 5-30 July 1999
Agenda item 13 (d)

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

GE.99-64238 (E)

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THE PROBLEM OF METROPOLITAN AREAS: A GLOBAL CHALLENGE TO WHICH PARLIAMENTARIANS MUST RESPOND IN TERMS OF URBAN CIVILISATION AND DEMOCRACY

Resolution adopted without a vote by the 101st Inter-Parliamentary Conference*
(Brussels, 15 April 1999)

The 101st Inter-Parliamentary Conference,

Aware that due to the mushrooming of cities and the steady pace of population growth, half of the world's population will be living in urban areas by the start of the third millennium,

Mindful that cities are a driving force behind the overall economic and social progress of nations and that as society has evolved, urbanisation has made it possible to improve the quality of life of a large proportion of the population by facilitating access to education, social services and health care for all citizens, especially children, as well as participation in cultural, political and religious life,

Convinced that the potential for progress of metropolitan areas can be exploited fully only if lasting solutions are found to the serious problems caused by the concentration of population and activities specific to large cities, the most significant of which are:

- the shortage of housing and the inadequate nature of some existing housing;
- environmental pollution in and around urban areas;
- the lack or shortage of water resources or water-treatment facilities;
- the deterioration of the building stock and the architectural heritage;
- the inadequacy of infrastructures;
- the high unemployment rate;
- the insufficiency of basic social services, particularly child care and care for the elderly, and of access to education and health care for all citizens, especially children;
- traffic congestion;
- problems linked to the ageing population;
- food insecurity;
- inadequate financial resources for local authorities to meet their obligations;
- the rising crime rate;
- prostitution, the sexual exploitation of children and drug abuse;
- heightened vulnerability to natural and man-made disasters;

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* The Conference is the principal statutory body of the Inter-Parliamentary Union whose membership currently comprises 138 national parliaments as well as five regional parliamentary assemblies.

Disturbed by:

- the insufficient participation of women in political decision-making, particularly in local government, which means that decisions are taken without reference to women's needs,
- the fact that employed women are still frequently relegated to inferior jobs and are not paid equitably, that many women face harassment in the workplace, and that economic restructuring has had a profound impact on women's employment in many countries,
- the knowledge that women still carry most of the burden of housekeeping and family care, whereas social programmes are not adapted to the dual role of women as wage earners and home-makers,
- the barriers faced by unemployed women, including lack of education and training, discrimination in hiring practices, and lack of access to credit to start up their own businesses,

Deeply concerned that all these problems primarily affect the poor and vulnerable social groups (the elderly, women, children, people with disabilities) while posing an ongoing threat to the lives of all inhabitants of large cities, regardless of their social category,

Aware that the developing countries, where most large cities on the planet are located, are the first to suffer from the negative effects of urbanisation, the cause of which is rural exodus rather than population growth rates, but *mindful* that the developed countries also face major, albeit different, problems linked to megacities,

Concerned that the faster pace of the "urbanisation" of poverty and the ever growing gap between rich and poor in large cities jeopardise solidarity, accentuate the danger that part of the urban population will become alienated and marginalised, resulting in social segregation,

Preoccupied by the increase, in recent years, of conflicts and wars which have led and are leading to the destruction of the housing and settlements of millions of people throughout the world,

Recalling the support which the Inter-Parliamentary Union has given to the follow up of the decisions of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, June 1992), the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, September 1994), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, March 1995), the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September 1995), and the World Food Summit (Rome, November 1996),

Recalling especially the contribution of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to the preparation of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Istanbul, June 1996), which addressed the problems of human settlements in general and large cities in particular, and the Union's action to promote the implementation, at national and international level, of the commitments and decisions adopted at that Conference,

Recalling also that the resolution entitled "Parliamentary Support to the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)", adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council at its 158th session (Istanbul, 20 April 1996), especially operative paragraph 4, points out that many human settlement problems will require legislative action and that the participation of national parliaments and their members in the implementation of the Habitat II commitments will therefore be vitally important;

Expressing appreciation for the activities of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements carried out in co-operation with its partners in the UN system, with a view to promoting urban areas which are more productive, more equitable and more sustainable, in the spirit of the Habitat Agenda,

1. *Urges* national parliaments to:

(a) promote full awareness of the positive role that cities play in the world as a source of social, economic, cultural and political development and, hence, of their importance to the sustainable overall development of human society;

(b) contribute, through appropriate legislative measures, to strengthening the institutional and financial capacity of governments to put into practice the commitments of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and to monitor the way in which these commitments are applied at the national level;

(c) when dealing with food insecurity, support the FAO Special Programme for Food Security which, *inter alia*, focuses on urban and peri-urban food production problems and addresses the bottlenecks associated with food supply and distribution systems;

(d) adopt, improve and supplement national legislation to create conditions conducive to sustainable urban development, by undertaking in particular to:

- meet the need, in both the industrial and developing countries, to strengthen local self-administration, the systematic application of the principle of subsidiarity and the decentralisation of responsibility together with the corresponding financial and personnel resources of local authorities, and to promote greater participation by the people;
- encourage the national private sector to invest and become involved in solving the problems of large cities, and to participate in a priority basis in urgent activities, such as the construction and improvement of housing and infrastructure, the management of household and industrial waste, the provision of adequate good-quality water, job creation, the delivery of basic services, etc.;
- create a favourable and stable climate for foreign investment, especially in the developing countries, based on a balanced complementarity between the rural world and cities;
- reinforce legislative measures to prevent and curb crime, prostitution, sexual exploitation of children and drug abuse, all of which are problems associated with urban areas;
- ensure a healthy environment in and around large cities by preventing activities harmful to the environment, supporting public bodies and associations involved in the protection of the environment, and increasing financial and technical resources for the preservation of the environment;
- promote measures for the conservation and restoration of the architectural heritage of cities, so as to preserve their identity and safeguard the spiritual and cultural particularities of each people;
- revitalise urban social services, especially health care and education;

(e) allocate to all levels of government, including local authorities, the budgetary resources needed for sustainable urban development;

(f) adopt the necessary legislative measures and allocate the necessary budgetary resources for the economic, social and cultural progress of rural areas, thereby helping to narrow the gap between cities and villages, balance rural-urban migration and thus prevent the overpopulation of large cities;

(g) take into consideration, in the legislative process, women's role in and contribution to the life of large cities, and the need to promote real partnership between men and women in the framing and implementation of urban development policies, by seeing to it that the principle of equal opportunity is applied; and recognise the particular needs of urban women by:

- taking steps to increase the number of women involved in political decision-making and particularly in local government, whether as observers or as elected officials;
- enacting specific legislation to encourage equality, end discrimination against women and in particular ensure equal pay for equal work;
- changing laws and business practices that discriminate against women, including laws on inheritance, land tenure and housing allocation;
- ensuring that credit is available to women, whether through dedicated funds or through the private sector;
- addressing the safety and security of urban women, both in the design of cities and in the provision of safe havens for women who are victims of violence;

(h) create or improve the legal framework for the protection of all underprivileged and vulnerable social groups living in large cities, *inter alia* by:

- preventing them from falling foul of discrimination or marginalisation;
- facilitating their access to decent housing, employment, education, health care, basic social services, infrastructures, etc.;
- encouraging them to participate actively in the framing of urban development policies;

(i) contribute to the creation of an environment conducive to the development of co-operation between States, their urban players and the competent regional and world bodies, with a view to achieving the goals of the Habitat Agenda as soon as possible;

(j) encourage the strengthening of technical and financial assistance to benefit large cities in developing countries;

2. *Calls on* parliamentarians to:

(a) see to the systematic application of the principles of good governance, in order to ensure the transparency, accountability, effectiveness and participatory nature of the management and administration of large cities, as prerequisites for their sustainable development;

(b) facilitate contacts and dialogue between citizens, local authorities and competent national bodies, with a view to solving the difficulties faced by urban communities;

(c) promote partnerships involving all committed and concerned players - private sector, local authorities, civil society, including NGOs, government, and also regional and international organisations - in the framing and implementation of sustainable development strategies of large cities;

(d) encourage exchanges of information, experience and know-how between local authorities at national and international level;

(e) promote the introduction of national and local systems for the collection, processing and utilisation of data pertaining to urban conditions and trends, as a basis for coherent strategies and programmes for the sustainable development of large cities;

(f) commit themselves to sustainable development in urban areas by encouraging sustainable patterns of production, consumption, transportation and settlement; pollution prevention; respect for the carrying capacity of ecosystems; and the preservation of opportunities for future generations;

3. *Urges* the industrialised nations to endeavour to allocate 0.7% of their GNP to development aid, as recommended by the United Nations and endorsed in the Brasilia Plan of Action adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union; and *invites* international financial institutions, the private sector and bilateral and multilateral aid organisations to contribute additional resources to consolidate national efforts to solve the problems of big cities;

4. *Urges* national parliaments and parliamentarians to use all the mechanisms of parliamentary diplomacy to promote peace and stability, to eliminate hotbeds of conflict and to put a speedy end to current conflicts, thereby reducing the risk of loss of human life, the obliteration of historical and cultural values, and the deterioration of the environment and the architectural heritage in urban centres;

5. *Recommends* that the Inter-Parliamentary Union and national parliaments support the activities of the UN Centre for Human Settlements and contribute more to the activities and programmes of the United Nations and its bodies operating in the field of sustainable development.

UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1999/NGO/4
19 July 1999

Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH/
SPANISH

Substantive session of 1999
Geneva, 5-30 July 1999
Agenda item 13 (a)

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: ENVIRONMENT

Statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

GE.99-64315 (E)

INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

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WATER: THE MEANS REQUIRED TO PRESERVE, MANAGE AND MAKE THE BEST USE OF THIS ESSENTIAL RESOURCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Resolution unanimously adopted by the 100th Inter-Parliamentary Conference*
(Moscow, 11 September 1998)

The 100th Inter-Parliamentary Conference,

Aware that water is one of the basic elements of life and the most important constituent of the human diet,

Also aware that freshwater resources are essential to basic human needs, health, food production and the preservation of ecosystems,

Mindful that water is one of the most important natural resources and one that will determine future prosperity and stability,

Concerned that potential water shortages increase the possibility that water will be used as a strategic threat and encourage that tendency,

Deeply concerned at the growing threat to water arising from a large number of natural and anthropogenic factors, the latter involving basic processes that result in pollution and shortages and often go hand in hand with wastefulness of the kind that occurs in households and some traditional agricultural methods,

Deeply concerned at the pollution of global water resources and the deterioration in their quality that have continued unabated for years, and at the growth in water consumption and use around the world which is aggravating water shortages in a number of regions,

Aware that many countries have neither the resources nor the capacity to collect, manage and analyse data necessary for planning sustainable water management, and lack the capacity to develop, monitor and enforce water management policies,

Noting that, although water problems occur in specific locations and regions, they are in fact global problems in that their frequency, magnitude, and potential effects are increasing rapidly,

Recognising the need for action to prevent water from becoming a factor limiting sustainable development,

Recalling the WHO "Guidelines for Drinking-Water Quality", and *taking into account* the results of important conferences that have dealt with the issue of water, for example the United

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* The Conference is the principal statutory body of the Inter-Parliamentary Union whose membership currently comprises 138 national parliaments as well as five regional parliamentary assemblies.

Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), the International Conference on Water and Environment (Dublin, 1992), the International Forum « Global Water Politics: Co-operation for Transboundary Water Management » (Bonn, 1998), the Expert Group Meeting on Strategic Approaches to Freshwater Management (Harare, 1998), the Ministerial Meeting on Water Resources and Sustainable Development (Paris, 1998) and the Sixth Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (New York, 1998),

Mindful of the resolution on environment and development adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union at the 87th Inter-Parliamentary Conference,

Requests and recommends to governments and parliaments:

1. to rapidly initiate co-ordinated and comprehensive international action by, *inter alia*, WHO, FAO, UNEP, HABITAT and other relevant United Nations organisations to ensure access to potable water, especially by vulnerable groups such as women and children, and to develop sustainable strategies for water use in view of the fact that more than a fifth of the world's population have no access to safe supplies of potable water and more than half have no proper sanitary facilities;

2. to implement globally valid minimum standards for the basic supply of potable water and water-related sanitation services to individuals;

3. to agree on international principles of equity regarding access to freshwater resources and, in the case of riparian States, to co-operate on matters relating to international watercourses, whether transboundary or boundary;

4. to take steps to conserve and protect aquatic ecosystems, recognising the important role of and interaction between groundwater, lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands, estuaries, the marine environment, vegetation, and in general the links between surface and air processes, at national and international level;

5. through international co-operation, including financial aid, to support research, access to reliable data, the transfer of technology and capacity-building (human, technical and institutional) aimed at appropriate, affordable and environmentally sound solutions to water resource and management problems;

6. to promote the development of alternative methods of supply water, such as purification, desalination and the efficient and safe use of untreated water, and to investigate the feasibility of novel ideas for this purpose;

7. to establish or improve legislative and regulatory frameworks that will facilitate integrated water resource management and encourage public and private investment in the water sector;

8. to take steps to ensure that each country adequately values its freshwater as both an economic and a social good through cost recovery;

9. to give priority to national water policies whose principles and programmes are consistent with the wishes of the national community;

10. to implement the commitments their country has made in regard to the protection of freshwater sources.

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UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1999/NGO/5
16 July 1999

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH

Substantive session of 1999
Geneva, 5-30 July 1999
Agenda item 7(c)

COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS: JOINT AND CO-SPONSORED UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS/ACQUIRED IMMUNODEFICIENCY SYNDROME (HIV/AIDS)

Statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

GE.99-64234 (E)

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Economic and Social Council
1999 substantive session
Item 7c) of the provisional agenda

GENERAL SEGMENT

(c) Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS)

*Written statement presented by the Inter-Parliamentary Union**

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION AND UNAIDS

In April 1998, at its 99th Conference in Windhoek, Namibia, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), with technical support from UNAIDS, unanimously adopted a resolution on «Action to Combat HIV/AIDS in View of its Devastating Human, Economic and Social Impact». According to the resolution, a Handbook was to be developed to assist legislators in implementing the *International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights* and in so doing, foster human rights as part of an effective response to HIV/AIDS.

UNAIDS, in consultation with the IPU, has since been in the process of producing a «Handbook for legislators on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights». The Handbook documents the principles in the *International Guidelines*, analyses these principles from the perspective of legislators, identifies the processes that legislators can use in order to implement a particular principle and cites Best Practice examples under each principle demonstrating how some countries have implemented the *Guidelines*.

In the spirit of the resolution, in order to establish a mechanism where lawmakers could thoroughly review and critique the draft Handbook, and where they could provide further national perspective, the IPU Council, meeting in Moscow in September 1998, agreed to sponsor a Parliamentarians' Working Group to work with UNAIDS in finalising the draft Handbook. UNAIDS, in consultation with the IPU, identified countries to participate in the Working Group. They were Botswana, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Philippines, Russian Federation, South Africa, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

* The Inter-Parliamentary Union is the world organisation of parliaments of sovereign States.

All members of the Working Group attended the session held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 24 to 26 February 1999. UNAIDS provided secretarial and technical support to the Working Group.

The objective of the meeting was to thoroughly review the issues in the draft Handbook to ensure that it addresses all relevant issues, that it contains a wide range of Best Practice examples of legislation, policy and programmes adopted by parliamentarians in the area of HIV/AIDS and human rights, and that its proposals are practical and can be implemented by legislators.

The opening statements were made by Mr. Anders Johnsson, Secretary General of the IPU, and Ms Sally Cowal, Director, Department of External Relations, UNAIDS, on behalf of Dr. Peter Piot, UNAIDS Executive Director. Dr. Najma Heptulla, Deputy Chairperson of the Upper House of the Indian Parliament, gave the keynote address on the role of parliamentarians in the context of HIV/AIDS.

These introductory remarks highlighted the roles of the IPU, UNAIDS and parliaments in dealing with HIV/AIDS issues; ways in which lack of human rights protection fuels the epidemic, namely the impact of discrimination on people living with HIV/AIDS, those presumed to be infected, their family and careers, and affects their ability to gain access to care and support; the vulnerability to infection of those whose economic, social and cultural rights are not respected, such as women in some countries; and the difficulty of informing oneself and protecting oneself from becoming infected where civil and political rights are violated, such as freedom of speech and association. It is also difficult for civil society to respond effectively to the epidemic.

Also emphasised was the role of parliamentarians in advancing HIV/AIDS and human rights issues at the national level: as *political leaders*, they can influence public opinion, and can increase public knowledge of HIV/AIDS issues, particularly as they relate to human rights; as *lawmakers*, they vote on legislative acts and participate in legal reform. They are thus critical in ensuring that legislation protects human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS and advances effective prevention and care programmes at the national level; as *advocates* they can mobilise the involvement of government, private sector and the civil society to discharge their societal responsibilities in responding appropriately to the epidemic; and as *resource mobilisers*, in deciding on national budget allocations they can enhance allocations affecting HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support.

The MPs conducted their work in two smaller Working Groups: Working Group 1 considered the sections in the draft Handbook covering «institutional responsibilities and processes» and «promotion of a supportive and enabling environment; Working Group 2 considered «law review, reform and support services.

These Working Groups thoroughly reviewed the whole draft Handbook by discussing their areas of focus page by page, identifying gaps, inconsistencies in the text and proposing amendments. In addition to the specific comments on the content of the draft Handbook, the Working Groups made the following general comments: the Handbook should be made as user-friendly as possible. To this end, it should have checklists highlighting the essential principles applicable in various areas. The Handbook should serve as a reference book, hence its content should be extensive. It should be well footnoted so that parliamentarians

have enough information for further research in the areas they wish to implement at national level.

Best Practice examples are important as they give focus to the principles by offering guidance as to how the principles of the *International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights* can be concretely implemented at the national level. However, in order to avoid over-expectation, there is need to assess the outcomes of the Best Practice examples highlighted in the draft Handbook. Only actual cases, which illustrate impact should be included in the Handbook. Ideas and Best Practice examples should be presented as part of a process rather than as isolated initiatives. Emphasis should be placed on the importance of evaluating Best Practice examples in order to assess their effectiveness and impact. Inclusion of superficial Best Practice examples may undermine the handbook. The Best Practice examples in the draft Handbook should not be confined to the national level but also should include examples at the regional, district and local levels, because in most decentralised systems this is where final policy decisions and legislation are formulated.

All Members of Parliament comments positively remarked on the productivity and organisation of the meeting; the opportunity the meeting provided them to share ideas and network amongst themselves on how to motivate leaders in their countries and constituencies for action on HIV/AIDS, the comprehensiveness and usefulness of the draft Handbook which is under preparation and the close IPU and UNAIDS collaboration which is critical if the Handbook is to be accepted and advanced as a working tool by Parliamentarians. In order to further foster this interaction, a suggestion was made of linking the IPU and UNAIDS Web Sites.

The Handbook will be finalised, edited and published as a joint UNAIDS/IPU document. It is anticipated that the Handbook will be formally launched by IPU and UNAIDS during the 102nd Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union scheduled to take place from10 to 16 October of this year in Berlin.

UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1999/NGO/6
19 July 1999

Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH/
SPANISH

Substantive session of 1999
Geneva, 5-30 July 1999
Agenda item 14 (c)

SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: CRIME PREVENTION
AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

GE.99-64319 (E)

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ACTION TO COMBAT THE CONSUMPTION AND ILLICIT TRAFFICKING OF DRUGS AND ORGANISED CRIME

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 100th Inter-Parliamentary Conference* (Moscow, 11 September 1998)

The 100th Inter-Parliamentary Conference,

Considering that the production, trafficking, marketing and consumption of drugs constitute a world problem which poses a serious threat to individuals, especially youth, to peoples and to States, and requires effective and practical concerted action since, together with terrorism and corruption, it is a major obstacle to the fulfilment of the aspirations of individuals and peoples to development, peace and well-being,

Recognising that this problem cannot be resolved solely by repressive measures, whether applied to supply or demand; on the contrary, it calls for an overall approach designed to overcome poverty and promote the development of peoples, while preserving the natural and environmental resources that are seriously threatened both by the production process and by the repressive measures that are used or proposed,

Recalling the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem, held in New York from 8 to 10 June 1998, which reaffirmed the need for international co-operation and co-ordination as an effective means of combating these problems, and *aware* that action to combat the demand for, production of and illicit trafficking in drugs and associated organised crime can succeed only if all countries and their governments co-operate and intensify their efforts in this regard,

1. *Demands* that States and the international community devote greater attention to solving the world drug problem;

2. *Recommends* that States, recognising their shared responsibility in this matter, co-operate at the multilateral, regional and subregional levels to achieve this goal;

3. *Recommends* to the United Nations General Assembly and regional, subregional and continental organisations that multilateral procedures should be set up as soon as possible to evaluate the progress of national strategies on the world drug problem, while fully respecting international rules and agreements, the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and their cultural specificities;

4. *Recommends* to the community of nations a comprehensive approach to the drug problem, including effective policies to combat the illicit use of drugs, recognising that demand and action to combat it are a basic element of this problem;

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* The Conference is the principal statutory body of the Inter-Parliamentary Union whose membership currently comprises 138 national parliaments as well as five regional parliamentary assemblies.

5. *Recommends* the development of drug control strategies that reduce the demand for drugs through education, prevention, treatment, public awareness and community anti-drug coalitions and campaigns;

6. *Recommends* that the countries which produce plant raw materials adopt an overall approach to the elimination of the illicit crops used for the production of drugs, within the framework of alternative development strategies, and *calls* for international co-operation to support programmes for the conversion of economies that depend on the production of such raw materials;

7. *Recommends* that all countries which produce chemical precursors implement more effective control and monitoring policies to prevent their illicit use, export and diversion for illegal purposes, and that the countries which produce plant raw materials improve their border control systems, in co-ordination with the specialised services of the police and the armed forces;

8. *Demands* that countries engage in special efforts to combat the laundering of proceeds from illicit drug trafficking and other related and unlawful activities, such as arms trafficking, organised crime, terrorism and corruption, by strengthening international co-operation in all areas at both regional and subregional levels, and for this purpose *calls on* all countries to sign the relevant international conventions and enact, within the framework of their respective constitutions, legislation requiring the demonstration of the lawful origin of the money in respect of single significant financial transactions;

9. *Recommends* that States, governments and international organisations provide the human, technical and financial resources that are needed to combat the supply of and demand for illicit drugs, and offer treatment and rehabilitation to addicts in order to facilitate their social reintegration;

10. *Recognises* the legitimate efforts being made by transit countries which are combating the transit of illegal drugs, and *recommends* that those efforts be supported by a combination of assistance and incentives where appropriate;

11. *Demands* that no country serve as a safe haven for persons accused of organised crime, money laundering, drug trafficking or terrorism, or wanted for such crimes, and that all countries refrain from helping such persons to evade the consequences of their crimes, and take all necessary action to bring them to justice, while respecting the sovereignty of States;

12. *Recommends* that countries study the effectiveness of current domestic laws, enforcement practices and legal penalties in reducing domestic drug demand;

13. *Urges* Member Parliaments of the Union to take legislative action that contributes to the application of the above-mentioned principles and report back on the action taken to the 101st Inter-Parliamentary Conference.

UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/1999/NGO/7
19 July 1999

Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH/
SPANISH

Substantive session of 1999
Geneva, 5-30 July 1999
Agenda item 14 (h)

SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: HUMAN RIGHTS

Statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

GE.99-64323 (E)

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STRONG ACTION BY NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS IN THE YEAR OF THE 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO ENSURE THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF ALL HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE 21st CENTURY

Resolution adopted without a vote[1] by the 100th Inter-Parliamentary Conference[*]
(Moscow, 11 September 1998)

The 100th Inter-Parliamentary Conference,

Acting in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948, whose principles and standards are reaffirmed in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of 1993,

Emphasising once again that the Universal Declaration constitutes "a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations",

Considering that on the eve of a new century the international community must go beyond merely reviewing the provisions of that historic instrument or calling for the respect of the principles enshrined in that and successive texts, and chart the course of future action,

Acknowledging that human rights, democracy, sustainable development and peace are interrelated and interdependent,

Recognising that human rights, owing to their importance, require effective protection under national legislation as well as international law, which is why many States have enshrined these rights and the main procedures for recourse in their constitutions,

Reiterating its belief that in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international action in the field of human rights must be based on awareness of the political, economic and social realities of each society, and that its principal objective must be to strengthen and promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms through international co-operation,

Affirming that the full participation of women in society and in democratic and transparent decision-making is fundamental to the achievement of their human rights and to stable and productive societies,

Aware that extreme poverty prevents the full exercise of human rights, and in some cases even threatens the right to life itself, and that the fight against poverty and the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights are interdependent objectives,

Reaffirming the great importance of the right to development as an integral part of basic human rights for developing countries, and *convinced* that its achievement will contribute to the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

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[*] The Conference is the principal statutory body of the Inter-Parliamentary Union whose membership currently comprises 138 national parliaments as well as five regional parliamentary assemblies.

Concerned that human rights are still subject to grave and repeated violations in many parts of the world and that millions of people are still deprived of their fundamental rights, which demonstrates the inadequacy of the efforts made to change the reality of human relations and to guarantee and protect human rights,

Deploring the political, legal, social, cultural, ideological and educational obstacles which in many societies stand in the way of education inspired by human rights and democracy,

Recognising the need to take specific measures to protect the victims of armed conflict, refugees and displaced persons,

Concerned at the ever-deteriorating situation of several indigenous peoples whose cultural identity is being lost and whose languages are dying out as a result of the policy of resettlement and assimilation pursued by some States,

Recalling resolution 1998/8 adopted at the 54th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on 3 April 1998 on the question of the death penalty,

Deploring the abetting of terrorism by any group of persons or by any government in any part of the world under any pretext,

Reiterating that no state of emergency or war may be used to further political and military goals through war crimes and violations of human rights, notably discrimination against girls and women and violence and abuse against children,

Recalling that 1998 is the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which provides an opportunity for parliamentarians from all countries once again to draw the attention of the international community to the significance of the Convention,

Welcoming the adoption of the Statute of the International Criminal Court by the United Nations Diplomatic Conference, on 17 July 1998 in Rome, as an important commitment by the international community to the elimination of impunity and the establishment of justice,

Gravely concerned at the growing threats to the life and liberty of humanitarian personnel working on behalf of the victims of armed conflict, refugees and displaced persons,

Reaffirming that the protection of the rights of parliamentarians is imperative if they are to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms in their respective countries, and that the representative nature of a parliament is closely bound up with respect for the rights of its members,

Stressing the importance of the results achieved by the Inter-Parliamentary Union over some twenty years, at the urging of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, in ensuring respect for the human rights of parliamentarians and for the representative and pluralistic nature of the parliamentary institution,

Recalling the many resolutions on human rights issues adopted in recent years by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in which governments and parliaments were urged to take steps to protect and promote human rights in various parts of the world,

1. *Calls on* national parliaments and regional and international parliamentary assemblies to take appropriate measures to ensure:

   (i) that international and regional human rights instruments are ratified and that those States which have not yet done so accede to these instruments;

(ii) that these rights are written into legally binding and judicially enforceable texts, such as national constitutions and international conventions;

(iii) that national law is reviewed and if necessary amended to conform with the norms and standards embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments derived from it;

(iv) that any notified reservations to international human rights instruments are restricted in scope and that all existing reservations are regularly reviewed with a view to their possible lifting;

(v) that international and regional human rights mechanisms, including the International Tribunals, are given full support and unrestricted access to information;

(vi) that independent national human rights bodies with a mandate to monitor compliance with human rights standards and promote human rights are created wherever they do not already exist;

(vii) that the necessary support is given to parliamentarians and non-governmental organisations working actively to promote the principles of human rights and to defend such rights;

(viii) that full support is given to the work of the United Nations system, especially to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, and to international and regional organisations, including the provision of appropriate resources and assistance to human rights field operations;

2. *Encourages* all parliaments as the institutional guardians of human rights:

(i) to hold special sessions around 10 December 1998 to celebrate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, identify existing shortcomings in the implementation of human rights and devise specific measures to promote the universal observance of human rights;

(ii) to set up national parliamentary committees on human rights to monitor the observance of human rights at the national and international level;

3. *Expresses* the hope that the IPU's governing bodies will consider holding a conference for the representatives of parliamentary human rights bodies in order to study means of strengthening parliamentary action for human rights;

4. *Calls on* parliaments to work actively to ensure:

(i) that national action plans are drawn up to protect and promote human rights by ensuring proper dissemination of knowledge concerning human rights and ways of promoting their realisation among the general public, and encouraging the media to play a vital role by bringing human rights issues to the notice of national parliaments and governments;

(ii) that national governments fulfil their reporting responsibilities towards the human rights treaty bodies in a timely and effective way and that the competent government agencies co-operate fully with the United Nations Special Rapporteurs so that they receive the necessary support to carry out their work effectively;

(iii) that foreign, economic and security policy is consistently framed in a way which effectively promotes democracy, development and human rights in other countries;

5. *Also calls on* all parliaments and their members:

(i) to work actively for the worldwide abolition of the death penalty or at least the establishment of a moratorium on executions pending the complete abolition of the death penalty;

(ii) to work actively to end the practice of torture throughout the world and to bring influence to bear on their respective national governments to ensure that they co-operate fully with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture;

(iii) to ensure that parliamentarians have the right to visit prisons and pre-trial detention centres and any other place where people are held against their will, at any time, in order to investigate the human rights situation there;

(iv) to work actively to ban the production, use and stockpiling of landmines and to ensure those who have installed landmines should be made to take responsibility for removing them;

(v) to urge governments to adhere to and take measures to implement international instruments based on the principle of protecting refugees and the victims of armed conflict;

(vi) to take measures to prevent the recruitment of children as soldiers and to ensure that children and young people are not sent to war zones or crisis areas;

(vii) to draft stricter legal standards to prevent physical and sexual violence against children, child pornography, child prostitution, the sale of children and harmful child labour, and to protect children from the effects of war;

(viii) to work actively to safeguard freedom of worship and to use their influence to promote freedom of thought, conscience, opinion and religion;

(ix) to bring influence to bear on their governments to ensure that development co-operation is made contingent on respect for human rights or that development co-operation strategies are shaped in such a way as to bring about an improvement in the human rights situation;

(x) to urge governments to continue to take effective measures to secure the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights and to alleviate the debt burden of developing countries;

(xi) to devise specific measures to promote non-discrimination with regard to national, ethnic and social minorities;

6. *Further calls on* governments to recognise that the rights to self-expression and development are fundamental and interdependent human rights, and *urges* them to demonstrate their commitment to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Declaration on the Right to Development by strengthening their efforts to bring to an end all cases of unlawful occupation which deny people their human right to self-expression and development;

7. *Finally calls on* States to refrain from adopting or applying unilateral measures contrary to international law and to the Charter of the United Nations, in particular coercive measures with extraterritorial effect;

8. *Appeals* to governments and parliaments to take appropriate measures to secure genuine equality for women, to ensure their effective and equal participation in public life, to give

them equal access to education and to enable them to achieve full enjoyment of their political, economic and social rights in conformity with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the IPU Plan of Action;

9. In this connection, *calls on* governments and parliaments to:

   (i) ensure the universal adoption and ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, removing national reservations, and enacting and enforcing national laws;

   (ii) adopt and monitor a national action plan, including implementation mechanisms, to improve the human rights of women and ensure that measures are activated at the parliamentary, governmental, regional and local levels;

   (iii) work towards the eradication of gender-based persecution in situations of war and conflict, and the provision of justice, security from sexual assault and reparation for the victims;

   (iv) enact and enforce laws on, and devote resources and programmes to, the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including trafficking in women and girls, rape and genital mutilation;

10. *Also calls on* States and the international community to enhance the access of women to economic well-being by:

   (i) providing women with equal access to economic resources, including the right to own property, to inheritance and to credit;

   (ii) urging the IMF, the World Bank and the United Nations to fast-track their review of international finances;

   (iii) ensuring equal access to education for women and girls;

   (iv) ensuring access to clean water so as to reduce unproductive effort by women, support food production and improve health;

11. *Recommends* that governments and parliaments, in recognition of women's rights in all their aspects, dedicate 8 March of the year 2000 to peace, development and democracy based on the empowerment of women;

12. *Urges* all States which have not already done so to sign and ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court at the earliest possible opportunity, and *recommends* that the parliaments of those States work actively towards this end; *further recommends* that all parliaments exert all their influence to bring about the speedy establishment and effective functioning of the Court;

13. *Calls on* all States to protect the rights of those who defend human rights around the world, including parliamentarians, *inter alia* by supporting the adoption of the draft declaration on human rights defenders at the 53rd session of the General Assembly;

14. *Requests* States to sign and ratify the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel of 9 December 1997 and meanwhile to consider ways and means of strengthening the protection of United Nations and other personnel carrying out activities in support of a humanitarian operation;

15. *Expresses* its appreciation to those States that have ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and *urges* parliaments to work towards universal adherence to and implementation of the Convention;

16. *Condemns* any act by any person, State or group of persons or States and all acts, methods and practices of terrorism of any kind, including State terrorist behaviour, as activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, threatening the territorial integrity and security of States, destabilising legitimately constituted governments, and targeting civilian populations and viable productive capabilities;

17. *Encourages* an ongoing dialogue between cultures, civilisations, religions and nations with a view to protecting and promoting human rights, and *urges* governments to seek the peaceful settlement of their disputes and differences through negotiations so as to create a peaceful environment for the full enjoyment of human rights by all humanity;

18. *Affirms* that the right to development and decent living standards is a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights which should be promoted and fully realised through international co-operation and the creation of a favourable international economic environment without hegemony or the imposition of policies of coercion or starvation of States, and that the inclusion of the Declaration on the Right to Development in the International Bill of Human Rights would be an appropriate means of celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

19. *Urges* all the Members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to take the necessary steps to ensure that the half-yearly reports of the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians and the corresponding resolutions of the Inter-Parliamentary Council are brought officially to the attention of national parliaments and are the subject of debate and, if need be, follow-up measures, and *urges* the Committee to disseminate an assessment of its action to restore respect for human rights and the principles of parliamentary democracy;

20. *Also urges* governments and parliaments to ensure full respect for parliamentary guarantees in order to safeguard the independence and autonomy of parliament, as well as the balance of power between the various arms of government, which is the foundation of any democratic system.

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1 Before the adoption of the resolution, the delegations of China and Sudan expressed reservations regarding the fourteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 5(i). In addition, the delegation of China expressed reservations on the eighteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 12, and the delegation of the Republic of Korea on operative paragraph 5(iv). The delegation of Armenia expressed reservations on operative paragraph 6. After the adoption of the text, the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic made known its reservations on operative paragraphs 4(ii), 5(ii), 5(iv) and 12.

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